

TOWN OF GILBERT
PLANNING COMMISSION – SPECIAL MEETING
Southeast Regional Library
775 N. Greenfield Road, Gilbert, AZ
December 18, 2019

COMMISSION PRESENT:

Brian Andersen, Chair
Carl Bloomfield, Vice Chair
Noah Mundt
Scott September
Jän Simon
David Cavenee
Les Smith
Nathan Mackin, Alternate
Philip Alibrandi, Alternate

STAFF PRESENT:

Catherine Lorbeer, Principal Planner
Eva Cutro, Planning Division Manager
Kyle Mieras, Development Services Director

Nancy Davidson, Assistant Town Attorney

RECORDER:

Elizabeth Stupski

CALL TO ORDER OF SPECIAL MEETING

Chair Brian Andersen called the December 18, 2019 Special Meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Andersen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Recording Secretary Elizabeth Stupski called roll and determined a quorum was present.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Chair Andersen called for a motion to approve the agenda.

MOTION: Vice Chair Bloomfield moved to approve the Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Smith.

Motion passed 7-0.

COMMUNICATIONS

2. COMMUNICATION FROM CITIZENS:

At this time, members of the public may comment on matters within the jurisdiction of the Town but not on the agenda. The Commission's response is limited to responding to criticism, asking staff to review a matter commented upon, or asking that a matter be put on a future agenda. There was no communications from Citizens.

3. REPORT FROM COUNCIL LIAISON ON CURRENT EVENTS:

Council Liaison was not present so there was no report given.

Town of Gilbert Planning Commission
Special Meeting – December 18, 2019

PUBLIC HEARING (NON-CONSENT)

Non-Consent Public Hearing items will be heard at an individual public hearing and will be acted upon by the Commission by a separate motion. During the Public Hearings, anyone wishing to comment in support of or in opposition to a Public Hearing item may do so. If you wish to comment on a Public Hearing Item you must fill out a public comment form, indicating the Item Number on which you wish to be heard. Once the hearing is closed, there will be no further public comment unless requested by a member of the Commission.

4. GP18-11, 2020 GENERAL PLAN: First Public Hearing to take public comment on the proposed adoption of the Town of Gilbert 2020 General Plan. The proposed 2020 General Plan includes a statement of community vision, goals and development policies as well as all elements required by state law, including additional elements particular to the needs and purposes of Gilbert.

Principal Planner Lorbeer stated the purpose of the special meeting of the Planning Commission. She mentioned it is the first Planning Commission hearing on the update to the General Plan. She stated that the Planning Commission's role is key to the process in developing and maintaining the General Plan and on a regular basis they determine whether a proposed development conforms with the plan's goals and policies. Ms. Lorbeer stated that no motion is being required at this time.

Principal Planner Lorbeer gave a preliminary review of the process and the proposed updates to the 2020 General Plan. She describes that the General Plan is a long-range policy document which sets the foundation for all other plans and actions. The Plan is thought of as the blueprint for the community and guides growth and development over a 20-year planning horizon. And the General Plan must have the required elements found in state law.

Ms. Lorbeer continued her presentation by sharing what is new in the plan.

- Made an innovative shift in the document. It is now combined into three categories: Community, Opportunity and Connectivity.
- Reduced and simplified the number of non-residential land use classifications. From feedback received during the 60 Day review by the public, there are no proposed changes to the residential land classifications.
- Identified the northwest portion of the Town as a growth area to recognize on-going employment and redevelopment efforts.
- Clean up some minor polygon slivers on the Land Use Map.

In closing, Ms. Lorbeer wanted to recognize and thank all the individuals who helped facilitate and participate in the general plan process which included staff, the consultant and the General Plan Advisory Group that represented the broad interests within the community and advisee and keep the staff on track.

Principal Planner Lorbeer introduced Mr. Matt Klyszeiko of Michael Baker & Associates for a more indepth look at the 2020 General Plan. Mr. Klyszeiko gave a quick refresher as to the process and transitioned into the draft 2020 General Plan document being presented to the Planning Commission. He stated the process was broken into four phases:

1st Phase - Recognize. It is about creating a community baseline assessment of where the community has been since the last update and where the community is projected to be in the next 20 years. This entails looking at existing plans and reports whether internal or external, and collecting census data, fact finding, and crunching numbers and analyzing the data. All the information is put into an assessment report and it informs the decision making throughout the process.

2nd Phase – Engage. Public dialogue and feedback is important and intertwined throughout the entire general plan efforts.

3rd Phase – Enrich. The information collected is then put to pen and paper and generates a draft general plan. This phase includes how the document is structured, and determines the goals and policies to focus on. It then goes back to the public for any feedback.

4th Phase – Achieve. Looking to refine the plan as it has gone through the 60-day review process. The draft 2020 General Plan is scheduled to be on the August 4th ballot.

Mr. Klyszeiko stated the Town engaged in a widespread public outreach campaign to inform the community about the 2020 General Plan. He noted some of the physical ways to accomplish this was through a General Plan Advisory Group, community workshops, one-on-one interviews, mobile workshops, presence at community events such as grand openings, senior centers, and schools. The Town also created tools to reach out to the community – General Plan Website, Online surveys, social pinpoint, video updates, social media (Twitter, Facebook and Nextdoor) as well as a direct email.

Mr. Klyszeiko noted some of the feedback received from the General Plan Advisory Group was concern with the vacant commercial corners, build-out, infrastructure maintenance and jobs. The public feedback focused on jobs before houses, the amount of multi-family being development, the need for commercial development and concerns about congestion and preservation of the heritage of Gilbert. Another important aspect for the General Plan is the Vision Statement. Mr. Klyszeiko mentioned the current vision statement served the community well over the years and only needed to be refined to ensure continued continuity and maintaining foundational values.

He outlined how the document would be more user-friendly as well as enhance the usability.

- Three themes: Community, Opportunity and Connectivity. These are the defining chapters.
- Tables created for the Goals, Policies and Elements.

Mr. Klyszeiko stated that during the 60-day review period, which was from November 7th to December 6th, it received 36 public review comments supporting consideration of air quality and energy sustainability and concerns of increased housing density and traffic congestion. The update is required to notified public agencies within the state (local and statewide) such as adjacent communities, MAG, ADOT, etc. The Town notified 63 agencies and received 10 agency responses supporting the plan organization and consideration of public health and wellness, and concerns about protecting wildlife habitat, promoting agriculture preservation and housing affordability.

The presentation included maps showing the existing land use classifications and the proposed land use classifications. Mr. Klyszeiko talked about compressing land use classifications and where they can be compressed. Based upon feedback received from the public, only non-residential land use classifications were compressed. Residential land use classifications will remain as is. Another map shown was for the Northwest Growth Area. There are existing growth areas and the northwest is one area that is getting a lot of attention, so it was identified as a growth area.

In conclusion, Mr. Klyszeiko summarized the scheduled timeline for the remaining milestones:

- January 22, 2020 – Planning Commission Hearing No. 2 – Recommendation to Town Council
- February 4, 2020 – Town Council Hearing – Recommend Action
- March 3, 2020 – Official Ballot Language Submitted
- August 4, 2020 – Primary Election Day

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chair Andersen open the hearing for public comment.

Ms. Nancy Ryan, Gilbert resident said the plan overall was well done. Her background experience is a retired planner who served as City of Tempe's project manager for their General Plan. She expressed a concern with the definition of Public Facilities/Institutional and the type of uses allowed which includes public and quasi-public, police and fire stations, colleges, libraries, post office and hospitals. She indicated the definition for institutional was too vague. The parcel Ms. Ryan is concerned with is located on the northeast corner of Higley and Ocotillo which has a designation as PF/I. She added the Town could potentially sell the property in the future and possibly be developed as a hospital. She pointed out the reason she moved from Chandler was because of a property in Chandler bought by Banner and developed as a 250-bed hospital with a helipad. She does not want to be in the same situation in Gilbert. Ms. Ryan requested removal of hospital as a listed use under institutional and would result in having to come to the town and request a general plan change. Ms. Ryan thanked the Commission for listening to her concern.

Chair Anderson asked if staff would like to address any of the comments. Principal Planner Lorbeer appreciated this resident who did attend one of the community workshop and staff did review the public facility definition and recognizes it does list a whole host of items which are more reflected of what is in the zoning categories and allows hospital. Ms. Lorbeer mentioned from the Town standpoint, the hospital facilities that are currently in Gilbert are very successful and as for future additional hospitals for the community, staff does not see the demand for at this time.

Chair Anderson inquired if there are any work session Ms. Ryan could attend. Ms. Lorbeer responded there are no more work sessions scheduled but will continue to remain in communication with the resident. Principal Planner Lorbeer mentioned that January 22nd is the next public hearing to receive comments.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION:

Vice Chair Bloomfield said he loved the General Plan and liked how it was made more concise or interpretive and it works well. As an engineer who looks at public policy, it is important to look at definitions and make sure what they are defining and appreciates the feedback from Nancy. Vice Chair Bloomfield asked if there is a zoning category which may prevent a hospital from the corner Ms. Ryan spoke about. Principal Planner Lorbeer would need to look at the zoning code but is confident a hospital is a permitted use in PF/I and that it is consistent with the General Plan.

Commissioner Smith asked a question that may come up about the timespan of the whole proposal. Principal Planner Lorbeer responded that the document will be updated in 10 years and there may be minor adjustments with that time period. She said that the plan focuses on a 20-year planning horizon, which would take the community to the year 2040.

Chair Anderson closed the public hearing and that they would see the General Plan next month on January 22nd. He extended an invitation to Ms. Nancy Ryan to attend.

Principal Planner Lorbeer reminded the Planning Commission there will be two meetings in January – January 8th and 22nd.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

COMMUNICATIONS

5. Report from Chairman and Members of the Commission on current events:

No reports from the Chairman or Commission members.

6. Report from Planning Services Manager on current events:

Planning Manager Cutro did not have anything to report.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Andersen wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Chair Andersen adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Brian Andersen, Chairman

ATTEST:

Elizabeth Stupski, Recording Secretary

DRAFT